

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of providing a multimedia conference between a plurality of
2 user devices over a network, comprising:
3 identifying information services to be provided to at least one of the
4 plurality of user devices during the multimedia conference; and
5 providing multimedia conference signals to the at least one of the plurality
6 of user devices, wherein the multimedia conference signals include the identified
7 information services.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving start-up signals from one of the plurality of user devices;
3 sending start-up requests to the others of the plurality of user devices; and
4 receiving start-up signals from each of the others of the plurality of user
5 devices in response to the start-up requests,
6 wherein the start-up signals include information for the identifying of the
7 information services to be provided to the at least one of the plurality of user devices.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein at least two of the plurality of user devices
2 request different information services, and
3 wherein providing multimedia conference signals comprises sending multimedia
4 conference signals that selectively include the requested information services to each of
5 the at least two of the plurality of user devices.

1 4. The method of claim 3, further comprising:
2 determining whether the information services of the at least two of the plurality
3 of user devices are to be provided continuously or non-continuously, and
4 wherein providing the multimedia conference signals further comprises at least
5 one of continuously and non-continuously including the requested information services in
6 the multimedia conference signals.

1 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the start-up signals include information
2 for determining whether the information services are to be provided continuously or non-
3 continuously.

1 6. The method of claim 4, further comprising:
2 determining one of the plurality of user devices to be a speaker of the multimedia
3 conference; and
4 discontinuing information services to any of the at least two of the plurality of
5 user devices that requests non-continuous information services and that is determined to
6 be the speaker.

1 7. The method of claim 3, wherein sending multimedia conference signals
2 that include the requested information services comprises at least one of sending real-time
3 information from a service provider to the respective end user and sending stored
4 information from a database to the respective end user.

1 8. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 receiving a request from a user device to change the information for the
3 identifying of the information service to be provided to the respective user device.

1 9. The method of claim 3, wherein sending multimedia conference signals
2 that selectively include the requested information services comprises providing the
3 requested information services as at least one of superimposed text, a banner, a split-
4 screen, and a picture-in-picture.

1 10. A communication apparatus for providing a multimedia conference
2 between a plurality of user devices over a network, comprising:
3 a controller; and
4 a memory, wherein the controller identifies information services to be
5 provided to at least one of the plurality of user devices during the multimedia conference
6 and provides multimedia conference signals to the at least one of the plurality of user
7 devices, wherein the multimedia conference signals include the identified information
8 services.

1 11. The communication apparatus of claim 10, wherein the controller receives
2 start-up signals from one of the plurality of user devices, sends start-up requests to others
3 of the plurality of user devices, and receives start-up signals from each of the others of the
4 plurality of user devices in response to the start-up requests, and wherein the start-up
5 signals include information for identifying the information services to be provided to the
6 at least one of the plurality of user devices.

1 12. The communication apparatus of claim 10, wherein at least two of the
2 plurality of user devices request different information services, and wherein the controller
3 sends multimedia conference signals that selectively include the requested information
4 services to each of the at least two of the plurality of user devices.

1 13. The communication apparatus of claim 12, wherein the controller
2 determines whether the information services of the at least two of the plurality of user
3 devices are to be provided continuously or non-continuously and provides the information
4 services in the multimedia conference signals in accordance with the determination.

1 14. The communication apparatus of claim 13, wherein the start-up signals
2 include information for determining whether the information services are to be provided
3 continuously or non-continuously.

1 15. The communication apparatus of claim 13, wherein the controller
2 determines one of the plurality of user devices to be a speaker of the multimedia
3 conference and discontinues information services to any of the at least two of the plurality
4 of user devices that requests non-continuous information services and that is determined
5 to be the speaker.

1 16. The communication apparatus of claim 12, wherein the multimedia
2 conference signals that include the requested information services comprise at least one
3 of real-time information from a service provider and stored information from a database

1 17. The communication apparatus of claim 11, wherein the controller receives
2 a request from a user device to change the information for identifying the information
3 service to be provided to the respective user device.

1 18. The communication apparatus of claim 12, wherein the controller provides
2 the requested information services as at least one of superimposed text, a banner, a split-
3 screen, and a picture-in-picture.

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